THE CRUSADER
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Welcome to the 4th issue of 'The Crusader'. With RL inundating the staff, we decided to take a break and put together a tongue-in-cheek version for this edition. We'll return to our usual FK coverage with the following issue.

We hope you enjoy perusing the following interviews and articles that might grace any local FK newspaper. They've been collected and offered for your amusement in this 'Summer Fanfic' issue. *g*

RAVEN RAVAGED IN ROWDY RUCKUS by Nom de Plume

Pandemonium broke out at approximately 11:15 Friday night when a regular patron of the Raven - considered to be one of the city's more outre' nightspots - Ms. Ima Victim, chose to favour the club's other guests with her personal rendition of the infamous 'fan dance.' According to eyewitness accounts, Ms. Victim's performance was anything but dull, encouraging several of the male patrons to want more than just a show from Ms. Victim. Their very forward advances were clearly not appreciated by Ms. Victim's boyfriend, a Mr. Tony "the Axe" Gambetti, who promptly took it upon himself to show her admirers the meaning of the word 'pain.' In minutes, so we are informed, an all out brawl erupted, especially after the band, led by another Raven regular, Javier Vachon, decided it was time to defend the lady's 'honour.

The club's owner, Mr. Lucien Lacroix a/k/a the Nightcrawler, appeared only moments later, having interrupted his evening broadcast on CERK, to see what the commotion was all about. Mr. Janette DuCharme told the News what happened next.

"We thought that things would calm down - Lacroix has that effect on people - but then there was a small...incident."

When asked to elaborate, Ms. DuCharme continued. "Mr. Gambetti clearly did not appreciate Lacroix's attempts to halt the melee, delivering - I believe you call it - a right cross to the left side of Lacroix's face. As you can imagine, Lacroix did not take kindly to Mr. Gambetti's assault."

Accounts of ensuing events differ, but what is known is that, somehow, Mr. Gambetti ended up suspended from one of the club's chandeliers. Gambetti also claims that, later that evening, he was abducted by space aliens and dropped into Lake Ontario about 50 feet from shore. So far, however, no one has been able to corroborate Mr. Gambetti's story.

Things eventually calmed down at the Raven, if they did not exactly return to normal. While the fight was underway, someone managed to replace all of the club's standard cocktail umbrellas with ones bearing the phrase, "Kickstart the Knight!" Mr. Lacroix was less than happy with this additional development, having already lost half his 'metal' CD collection and a particularly rare ABBA cassette during the altercation. Mr. Vachon, too, complained, saying, "I even found one of the things in my hair! Who *are* these people???"

Janette's Helpful Household Hints

Ah, bloodstains are a common headache to the fashionable vampire, non? Unsolvable problem? Pas de tout. I have put together a list of ten ways to deal with those pesky red spots:

10) Leave them be! The stain's perfume will attract that special vampire. 9) Become too old and powerful for laundry. 8) Sell the stained clothing as a lost Jackson Pollack painting. 7) Ask Nicola to search for a cure. 6) Isn't there something about removing stains in the Abarat? 5) New, from BonCo! 'Eternal Stain Remover'. 4) Stop the problem before it starts: wet naps! 3) Have your tall, dark and handsome bartender keep plenty of soda water on hand. 2) Wear only blood red and black ensembles. 1) Throw the stained garments out, then go shopping!!

Biting Comments

"Good evening, gentles all, and welcome to Nightwatch with the Nightcrawler. Tonight's programme will be directed to all of you children of the night who so easily profess your love, your devotion, to a person, a cause, or a dream. It is said that 'actions speak louder than words.' What of your actions, my children? Do they speak of a willingness to go beyond what is normal, what is required, to get what you love or desire? Or do they betray you? Do they shed a not so flattering light on you, showing you to be less than dedicated to the cause you so firmly espouse? Perhaps another antiquated phrase fits you better: 'Talk is cheap. "Take a good look in the mirror, my young ones, and tell me what you see. I am the Nightcrawler, and I am listening to - and watching - you. *All* of you.

View From the Manila Folder By S. Clark

"Ok, ok." Everyone got quiet as Tracy started waving her hands around. "How about this. We do it like 'I Love Lucy', but with a gender reversal thing. Nat can be the working professional with Nick as the goofy, meddling househusband."

Nat grinned at Nick. "Nickie, you've got some 'splaining' to do."

"But Nat'lie," whined Nick. "Waaahhhh!"

"So what do we get to do?" asked Vachon.

"We'll be the wacky couple from upstairs. Another reversal; this time we're younger."

Janette pouted. "But there is not a job for moi." She sidled up next to Nick. "Perhaps I can be the sexy next-door neighbor who goes to visit while the wife is at work."

Under Nat's glare, Nick freed himself from her grasp and moved out of reach, pretending to be interested in some smudge on the wall.

Janette shrugged and went back to sit next to LaCroix.

"Well, it was just a thought," murmured Tracy.

Vachon patted her hand. "It was a nice thought."

"How about one of those situation comedies where everyone lives in the same building?" asked Natalie.

"Lovely idea," droned LaCroix. "I've always wanted to be a role model for the twenty-somethings."

"You could be the wacky landlord," suggested Urs.

LaCroix hissed at her in response.

"You know," said Nick, "maybe we're just not a situation comedy group."

"Such insight, Nicholas. It's only taken what, a year, to figure that out?" LaCroix brushed a speck of lint from his lapel

"Almost two," added Reese, "but who's counting."

"At least you were around for season three," interrupted Schanke. "I got blown up with Cohen to start off that one with a bang." He nudged Stonetree. "Get it? Blown up? Bang?" Schanke kept laughing even though he was the only one.

"Wait a second, I hear something?" said Nick. "It's opening."

Thelma, a file clerk for Sony Tri-Star licensing, pulled open the drawer marked 'F-G'.

"Hey," came the shouts from the "Forever Knight - TV" folder. "We're in here, let us out."

Thelma rolled her eyes. "I'm not going through this again. Your show's gone. Your actors have moved on. Just give it up."

LaCroix concentrated on the woman, hearing her heartbeat. "You are going to help us with a reunion episode. Possibly a three picture deal. Or better yet, a fourth season."

"Yeah, that's me, the one who makes those choices. Now will you quit it with that whammy thing?!?" Thelma slammed the door shut. "I hate opening that one."

Judy, who was just hired on, hadn't been allowed into the cabinets yet. "Is it always like this?"

"Not always. Some of them aren't remembered at all. They just grow quiet and listless; that's pretty sad. Others, though," she shrugged. "The fans hang on, it makes the characters take on a life of their own. These guys got tired of figuring out who lived and died at the end of their show so they started trying to figure out what other show they can do. Weird, it's all just weird."

Muffled cries came from the drawer.

Thelma motioned back towards the cabinet. "But, I will say, they're persistent."

The hardworking members of Kickstart The Knight have begun a national ad campaign intended to send a message to fans and 'The Powers That Be' alike that we fans are still here and we want more Forever Knight. To this end, we have already placed ads in USA Today and Variety. Our next goal is to place an ad in TV Guide (see ad to the right). As you all know, advertising is not cheap. While we are holding a number of auctions to raise money, we would also appreciate any monetary donation you might wish to make to aid in the fight to bring back The Knight. If you would like to donate to the KtK FK Ad Fund, please send a check, payable to "TV Guide Magazine" to:

Susan Ellen Field
Savannah at Coral Springs
711 Riverside Drive
Apt. 1411
Coral Springs, FL 33071
Many, thanks!

I Was Janette's Seamstress by Thread Bear

It's not like I didn't do everything for the 'woman'!!! GEEZ! She wanted all black clothes, I designed all black clothes. Of course every now and then I did throw in the touch of red! She wanted it low cut, then she wanted it up to her neck! She wanted the back low/high.. I tell you, it was exhausting!!!

I never had a second for myself. She always had to have her clothes just so for the two "men" in her life. That Lacroix and that gorgeous hunk Nicholas!

One night I made the mistake of trying to get him for myself...things didn't quite work out...so here I am, at the Raven, still "waiting" on Janette Ducharme. Of course I do get to see her guy Nicholas every now and then...OOPS!! Gotta go, "SHE'S" calling me again...ALMA!!!!!!

Drinks "In" The House By I. M. Lush

Situated in the heart of downtown Toronto is a small, dimly lit little nightclub called "The Raven." It is frequented by a community who like their music louder than their colors, and their drinks warm, red and flowing. They are a rare breed of connoisseurs.

The proprietors of The Raven cater to their unusual customers by providing an assortment of vintages, ranging from the older, mellow variety to a young, vivacious vintage, recommended for those whose tastes run to the more adventurous.

Since the club is a bit on the small side, the nightly offerings are often limited. However, on any given night the patrons describe the selections as "intoxicating," and "sensual."

Of course, if you decide to partake of the offerings at the Raven, but find nothing interesting at the bar...you can always peruse the well-stocked wine cellar to find your type of vintage.

The activities at the Raven begin late, but continue on until the early hours of the morning. Few customers leave without feeling satiated.

Driving Tips in Toronto By Nicholas B. Knight

Toronto is a big city. However, that doesn't mean that maneuvering through the crowded streets has to be an exercise in creative obstacle avoidance. Listed below are a few pointers that will help make your driving experience in Toronto a pleasant one.

* Stoplights. Red means stop, yellow means slow down, and green means go. Unless of course, you are having a flashback to a previous life and, with mysterious music playing in the background, you completely lose track of where you are...oblivious to the blaring car horns behind you.

* Crosswalks. All pedestrian crossings are well-marked in fluorescent white lines at major intersections. You are required to stop at these intersections to allow pedestrians the right-of-way. That is, of course, unless someone has cut the brake lines in your classic Cadillac and you find yourself careening down a hillside with polka music blaring from your radio. In that case, it's every man for himself!!!

* Turn signals. Always signal when indicating a turn. We are a polite race of people in Canada, but there is no excuse for rudeness. If you fail to use your turn signals, you may find that Canadians know a variety of hand signals that will let you know you have been an inconsiderate clod.

* Night driving. The streets of Toronto are busy, even at night. However, rarely does anyone have trouble finding their way in the dark. If you do get lost, however, you can always stop in local clubs, such as the Raven, where you may hear tales of the Nightcrawler. We, in the Toronto PD suggest you ignore any reported sightings of people flying, or morphing into creatures of the night.

* Finally, the streets of Toronto are relatively safe at all hours of the day or night. Occasionally you may find cars speeding towards you, the driver of said car in a coma and spouting Latin incantations...if this happens, we suggest you find the nearest exorcist (check city listings for "House of the Damned."

* Enjoy your stay in Toronto! Remember, we in the police department are here to serve...day and night!

Screed's Tour of the Biggest All-Night Swap Meet in Toronto

(Author's note: I recently had the honor of accompanying Screed, a noted expert in the field of swap meets, to the largest example Metro Toronto has to offer. These are the highlights Screed pointed out to me about the locale and organization.)

*On Parking: There's snarks o' room ta' in-cue-bate yewr wheels! Aye find tha' sec-shun fer tha' bike-cycles most accommadatin' wot' wit' tha' telephone poles ta' safe me Schwinn tew!

*On Access for the Handicapped: There's sewer ax-cess ya' know. It really bits the bacon fer us sunlight-tew-ally challenged mates! A droog can pop inna out onna blue suede day an' nawt risk toastin' 'is posties off!

*On the Variety of Booth Merchandise: There's bits wit' a pretty spark-a-ly speckle tew 'um. There's bright n' shiney bits ta' tickle tha' fancy n' yewr pants. Yew kin find every-trinkley -thingee tha' a mate could inspire ta' vayo under these shingles! An' there's duct tape, tew!

*On Getting A Good Trade For Your Merchandise: A carouche 'as got ta' git 'is cut, tha' fer bleedin' sure! Folks tend ta' look down on us lower types, but nawt at tha' swap! It's everydroog for hisself, and may tha' malenkiest droog win. Go fer tha' gusto when yew tit-fer-tat, an' git as much as tha' shiney pretties as yew can! 'Ere's a hint fron yewr man, Screed: they likes tha' blue box transpondergummies wi' tha' goo inside. Yew get lots o' cash wot fer them, an' on tha' police payroll ta' boot!

Water Cooler Woes by Joe Reese

I ask each and every one of you to take a moment to reflect on the water coolers of the past. Whether it had cone-shaped cups, or cups like the ones you find in fancy hotel rooms, it doesn't matter. Just think about those water coolers. Remember all of the wonderful times you spent with those water coolers. The days when your mouth was so dry, and those water coolers helped your mouth survive the drought...

Now please wipe the tears from your eyes, and think happier water cooler thoughts. Think about the one that is currently in your place of work. Don't you cherish, don't you love this water cooler? Do not think about when you may have to leave this water cooler, but think of the time you have spent with this water cooler. And all of the times you will spend together in the future. Isn't it wonderful?

Being the Captain of a prominent Toronto precinct, I assure you, there will be bad times. I've had many, many bad encounters with the water cooler at my very own precinct. But, sometimes, as I drink the cold, stale, coffee from my cup, I reflect upon the beautiful moments I've spent with my water cooler. The shining moments when my reality is far from real and I believe for a short amount of time that water will come out of that spout. Those have been some very happy moments.

I hope that someday you, and I, will forget our woes of the many water coolers we have used (or attempted to use) in our life, and will be happy with our water coolers, working or non-working.

Natalie's Collection of Unused Nighties by Natalie Lambert

What a pleasure it is to see you! *smile* It's been a long time since we've had a chance to chat. Nick? Oh, he's fine. He should be here in a while, if you want to hang around and see him. No, he hasn't asked the big question yet and no, neither have I. You know things are...complicated.

What's this present for? You know it's not my birthday yet. Oh, all right. I do love surprises. Ahhh...not another nightie... *sigh* Well, at least it's a color I don't have. There's a virtual rainbow in my lingerie drawer now.

Do you remember that green teddy the Schankes gave me for Christmas several years ago? Ha! Don't laugh. At least they waited until Grace, Nick, and Joe Stonetree were the only ones still mingling around Don and Myra's house before they gave it to me. I must have looked quite festive after Schanke laid that slinky hunter green material on my shoulder. I'm sure it went with my flaming red features quite well.

Yes, well...I didn't really buy his reason either. "I just want to make sure the color's 'you', Nat." That sounded more like matchmaker Myra's influence.

I was ready to kill Schank, until I noticed the gleam in Nick's eye. Hmmm... I had never considered green to be one of my good colors, until that moment.

And the black lacy piece. Yes, you remember it, don't you? Ah, huh, my 28th birthday party at the morgue. What? How does Nick like black? Ohhh...I'll have to get back to you on the answer to that question.

I'm really glad you decided to stop in for a visit. Nick's going to be disappointed he missed you. And don't worry; we're doing just fine. Yes, well...I just might give this new nightie a test run, just for the scientific research. *laugh* You know me, completely devoted to my special projects.

Divia's Kids' Corner Word Search

((note: I've fought the servers concerning the placement of the letters, trying to get them to hold a line. Hopefully aol doesn't mangle it. If it comes through scrabbled, contact me and I'll send it through as an attachment. *g* April))

M O T O R C Y C L E B O R H T A B Cup
S U T C A C V T N E E R C S G I B Fridge

E N I H C A M G N I R E W S N A L Piano
C A L L I D A C O C S H A K E W A Alarm
E N I E T O R P A L S T E R E O C Paints
I I M R A L A M A K F B D O D F K Cross
P M K S P I E G Y N I C K C O E B Corks
L A H I N R J L K L R U L M O D U Blinds
E T O T A U I L L O D P N U L A D Suns
T I S P Q G S R S S N T U V B J D Shake
N V S B H Z E S A Y X A W L S S H Games
A C E T D F L O E D I V I G W H A Loft
M N M K E G D I R F J N T P O I K Nick
O T A N N I N G B E D Q R F C S C Knack
X D G W K C A H W S E L T T O B A Cactus
R E M O T E C O N T R O L V U L N Doll
H L Z R S A M A J A P K L I S Y K Bottles

Golf Clubs Candles Skylight Answering Machine Bathrobe
Tanning Bed Stereo Remote Control Vitamin A
Big Screen TV Protein Cadillac Mantelpiece Cow's Blood
Silk Pajamas Black Buddha Motorcycle Jade

ORIENTAL TATTOO PARLOUR

YOU ASK FOR IT, YOU GET IT! WE DO ANY AND ALL DESIGNS! MANAGEMENT NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MISSING ARTICLES DURING DELECATE WORK, SUCH AS: ONE PINK SLIPPER AND/OR GIRLFRIENDS NAMED MELORA! PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN INK, AS WE ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY!

"Vampire's Best Friend" by Raleigh the Dog

Flashback: 19th century:

Thinking back, I could have, should have made a better choice in Masters. But it was a cold dark night and I thought it was starting to rain a bit. And "HE" did have a huge sack of meat hanging over his shoulder. So I followed the poor lonely guy home. Wasn't much of a place, but he did pat me on the head, and gave me scraps of whatever it was that he kept bringing back each night. He just kept the liquid bits for himself. It turned out to be a nice arrangement. We went out each evening, bit assorted things, brought home what was left and "bonded".

Many was the night we would compare fang length, talk about the thrill of the hunt, etc. You know "guy things" even though he did most of the talking. Well... Okay "all" of the talking. but I had great eye contact going!

Anyway, one evening this "other" guy shows up. So I'm giving him my dog routine. You know, the long hard stare, excessive growling/barking. The works! He was trying to get my master to leave with him and return to what I guessed was a nicer set-up. For a second, I thought I could weasel my way into a better life-style, but this "Lacroix" didn't take to me. Go figure!!!

As it turned out, neither me nor my master left with the guy! Next night, I'm out and about watering the lawn, when this Lacroix grabs me, chains me up and calls another guy over! Actually, all I saw were bushes shaking, due to a low budget!!!! Next thing I know, I have longer fangs, glowing eyes, and definitely changed eating habits! Like all of a sudden, I had cravings for blood! What's up with that? For a while after, I bit everything in sight: leg of lamb, leg'o mutton, leg of unknown running fast through the woods...seemed like a nice life or "unlife"... One night, I reunited with my master. We met and greeted. And then he says he's going for a steak, as in "s-t-a-k-e"! How was I to know it didn't mean sirloin? Next thing I know, he's saying his farewells, and I'm feeling a sharp pain (and it wasn't gas as I first suspected!). And I left this world for the next.

The Present:

"HE" comes into the precinct. I know that face, he thinks I don't remember. HA!!! I'm with my new "master" now. I kinda' like the name 'Perry'...don't you?

Slacker's Guide to Motorcycle Maintenance By Javier Vachon

A motorcycle is a toy. That's the first rule; never forget it. What happens when toys break? The fun's over, end of party, adios. Keep your toys running properly, period. You don't have to make a grand production out of it: methodical upkeep when it's needed will be sufficient. Don't put off oil changes and lubes, but only do what's necessary to keep things running smoothly. A motorcycle is for riding. Don't stick it in the garage with a tarp over it or prop it in the corner where it will look nice. What a waste. Bikes were made for motion, not gathering dust. Get out some night and feel the roar of the engine between your legs and the wind in your hair. That's right, in your hair. I know some of you out there can afford to risk a little speed minus a helmet without worrying about brain damage. Take advantage of it, because you can. I mean, really, what's the point of having the power if you don't use it?

Keep your motorcycle clean. Greasy, muddy bikes don't scream cool. I'm not saying you have to scrub the thing with disinfectant. What kind of guy do you think I am? My point is that you want your bike to look like it means business and can handle a few curves, not like it's on the verge of falling into a rusted heap. Polish the chrome now and then: it keeps your motorcycle looking dangerous. They're supposed to look dangerous - why else have one?

**Our heartfelt thanks to the following people who helped make this special issue of 'The Crusader' possible: Bonnie Rutledge, Julie Stafford, Susan Ellen Field, April Hackett, Susan Clark and Bobbie Williams. We had a lot of fun this time around, but we promise to get back to business in the next issue of "The Crusader."